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REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the detailed remarks. Claims 1, 5, 6, 8, 13 and 17 have been amended. Claims 2, 7, and 21-23 have been cancelled. New claims 24-33 are presented. New claims 24 and 25 are allowable dependant claims 14 and 20 in independent form. Accordingly, claims 1-20 and 24-33 are pending.

Claims 1-6 and 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Carpentier* (4,886,254.) Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. *Carpentier* discloses a leaf spring that has "a parallelepipedic central part 2 joined to two end parts 3, 4 of evolute shape, having in the horizontal plane (FIG. 2) a reduction in width concomitant with an increase in thickness in the vertical plane (FIG. 1), the cross-section remaining approximately constant." [Col. 2, lines 46-51] *Carpentier* provides an equivalent shape at each end. *Carpentier* fails to disclose a forward leaf spring segment thicker in depth than said rearward leaf spring segment as recited in the amended claims.

Claims 8-12, 15-18 and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *Strong* (4,886,254.) Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. *Strong* discloses a core 38 which is disposed between and bonded to a pair of outer skins 40 and 42. Each of the skins is made of high-strength steel while the core 38 is made of any one of a variety of stiff plastic materials. The skins and core of *Strong* are of uniform thickness (Figures 3 and 4) with an equivalent shape at each end (Figure 1). *Strong* fails to disclose a forward leaf spring segment thicker in depth than said rearward leaf spring segment as recited in the amended claims.

Claims 1, 5-11, 16-18, 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by *McGee* (3,580,347.) Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. *McGee* discloses a pair of leaf springs which are mounted together at a center portion 26 which also support the axles. [Col 3, lines 12-21] The only mounting arrangement disclosed by *McGee* is that of conventional U-bolts and clamps. *McGee* fails to disclose a mounting segment which includes a

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tapering width and an expanding depth such that any cross-section perpendicular to the mounting segment and within said mounting segment provides a singular cross-sectional shape as recited in the amended claims.

Claims 8, 9, 11-13, 16, 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Parks* (4,061,364) in view of *Strong* (4,886,254.) Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections as there is there absolutely no teaching, suggestion, or motivation to modify *Parks* in view of *Strong* as proposed. The Examiner admits that *Parks* fails to teach a leaf spring manufactured from a composite. In fact, *Parks* admits only a *conventional* leaf spring stack 18 having planar constant width and thickness leaf spring member. [Col. 1, lines 62] As described above, the skins and core of *Strong* are stacks of uniform thickness. A proper suggestion or motivation to make a combination requires some benefit to result from the combination. When the additional teachings of a secondary reference do not provide any benefit to the arrangement disclosed in a primary reference, no prima facie case of obviousness exists. Because this combination provides no benefit and, therefore, is improper, there is no prima facie case of obviousness. The claims are properly allowable.

Even if the combination were properly made, there are differences between the claimed invention and the teachings of the cited references so that the combination does not meet the limitations of Applicant's claims. As described above, *Parks* in view of *Strong* fails to disclose or suggest a forward leaf spring segment thicker in depth than said rearward leaf spring segment as recited in the amended claims.

New claims 26-33 recite further features of the present invention which are neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references and are thus properly allowable.

Please charge \$230.00 to Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, for 8 claims in excess of 20 and 1 additional independent claim. If any additional fees or extensions of time are required, please charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1482.

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Applicant respectfully submits that this case is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a teleconference will facilitate moving this case forward to being issued, Applicant's representative can be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully Submitted,

CARLSON, GASKEY & OLDS, P.C.



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